



Wisconsin Main Street Case Study Promotion

Downtown West Bend Farmers Market

Farmers markets have been attracting people to Wisconsin communities for many years. Downtown West Bend features one of the best. The weekly goal of the farmers market is to attract visitors to the downtown neighborhood to walk along an open market, window shop the downtown businesses, and enjoy the downtown coffee shops and restaurants. The West Bend Farmers Market is held every Saturday morning for 22 straight weeks in the historic downtown. In 2003, over 54 vendors filled the streets with herbs, plants, produce, and organically grown products. From June through October, the products transition from plants and bedding to apples, pumpkins, squash and much more. The vendors sell out of the back of their trucks.

Each vendor is charged \$150 for the season or \$50 a day. The market brings in approximately \$7,500 to the Downtown West Bend Association (DWBA) each year. Farmers sign a contract with the DWBA each year. Expenses include advertising for the event. The DWBA works with local 4-H Clubs. The clubs are paid \$50 each Saturday to help organize and execute the market. The host groups provide approximately 10 volunteers that check in all vendors, collect daily fees, and ensure that the market runs smoothly. The director of the West Bend Business Association trains the volunteers.



The farmers market has very specific rules to maintain the integrity of the event. Market stalls are rented only to bonafide growers or producers of the products that are sold. All products must be locally grown, and no wholesale produce may be sold. Some garden art is allowed. Vendors are allowed no more than three single stalls to display and sell their products. Also, dogs are restricted from the event.

In addition to the market vendors providing a wide selection of products, a downtown park is utilized for entertainment. Local musical groups perform and entertain the visitors to the market. The DWBA also provides a community table where local non-profit groups can promote their organization.

The downtown businesses capitalize on the big crowd of visitors each Saturday. Businesses are allowed a free space within the market to set up outside of their building. This can be used to sell products, promote services, or distribute information. The Downtown West Bend Farmers Market is a true reflection of a community coming together to support each other. It is a great farmers market.